

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 KUWAIT 00879 070908Z

11
ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SS-20 NSC-07 SSO-00 NSCE-00

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 INRE-00 MC-02 L-03

ACDA-19 EUR-25 DRC-01 /106 W
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O 070840Z MAR 74
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8966
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T KUWAIT 0879

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: MAASS, KU
SUBJ: FMS KUWAIT -- AIRCRAFT

SUMMARY: IT SEEMS CLEAR GOK HAS DECIDED NOT RPT NOT TO PURCHASE AMERICAN AIRCRAFT WE HAVE OFFERED AND IS PLANNING TO PURCHASE MIRAGE F-1'S AND BRITISH JAGUARS VERY SHORTLY FOR FUTURE DELIVERY. SINCE F-5 AND A-7 NO LONGER IN RUNNING WE PROPOSE OFFERING F-4 WITH DOGFIGHT MIDDLE FOLLOWED BY F-14 AS OUR LAST CHANCE. REQUEST RESPONSE SOONEST. END SUMMARY

1. UPON HEARING REPORTS THAT GOK DECISION TO PURCHASE FIGHTER AIRCRAFT WAS NEARING AND THAT FRONTRUNNER REMAINED MIRAGE F-1, COL MURPHREE AND I CALLED ON MINDEF SHAIKH SAAD FEB 27 TO MAKE ANOTHER MAJOR PITCH IN SUPPORT OF F-5E AND A-7. ESSENCE OF OUR PRESENTATION WAS THAT KUWAIT'S REQUIREMENT WAS NOT RPT NOT FOR MACH TWO PLUS INTERCEPTER TRYING TO PLAY DUAL ROLE OF CLOSE AIR SUPPORT AND AIR SUPERIORITY, BUT TWO AIRCRAFT, EACH SPECIALIZING IN ONE OF THESE ROLES. MOREOVER, WE POINTED OUT, GOK COULD ACQUIRE TWO US AIRCRAFT (ONE F-5E AND ONE A-7) FOR LESS THAN PRICE OF ONE F-1. IT WAS CLEAR AT END OF MEETING THAT MURPHREE'S AND MY COMMENTS HAD IMPACT ON MINDEF (AND ON COL SAYEGH, ALSO PRESENT), AND WE OFFERED BRING IN EXPERTS TO PURSUE AND EXPLAIN OUR IDEAS FURTHER IF KUWAITI AF WISHED.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 KUWAIT 00879 070908Z

2. IN NEXT SEVERAL DAYS WE LEARNED THAT SUBSEQUENT TO ABOVE

MEETING, MINDEF CALLED KAF PILOTS TOGETHER FOR ANOTHER OVER-
ALL REVIEW OF KAF FIGHTER REQUIREMENTS. RESULT OF THAT MEETING,
WE HAVE BEEN TOLD, WAS DECISION TO SPLIT FIGHTER ORDER BETWEEN
F-1 AND JAGUAR. WE ALSO TOLD KUWAITI PILOTS HAD GOOD THINGS
TO SAY ABOUT A-7, BUT IN THE END JAGUAR WON OUT FOR CLOSE AIR
SUPPORT ROLE. WE ALSO TOLD THAT FURTHER CLINCHER WAS BRITISH
OFFER SUBSTANTIALLY LOWER ORIGINAL PRICE FOR JAGUARS. F-5E,
WE TOLD, CAME OUT AT BOTTOM OF LIST AT MOD MEETING.

3. WITH FOREGOING INFORMATION IN MIND, I WENT TO SEE MINDEF
AGAIN ON MARCH 5. I SAID I WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING DIRECTLY
FROM MINDEF IF HE BELIEVED FURTHER REVIEW BY US EXPERTS OF
KUWAIT'S FIGHTER REQUIREMENTS WOULD BE USEFUL OR NOT. AS
EXPECTED, MINDEF DID NOT GIVE ME CLEAR ANSWER, BUT I GAINED
DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT US AIRCRAFT SO FAR RPT SO FAR OFFERED
WERE NO LONGER OF INTEREST TO GOK.

4. I TOLD MINDEF I WAS PERSONALLY GLAD THAT GOK HAD DECIDED TO
SEND KUWAITIS FOR PILOT AND MAINTENANCE TRAINING IN US, BUT
I WOULD PREDICT RIGHT THEN AND THERE THAT AFTER US TRAINING
KUWAITIS WOULD CRITICIZE MOD FOR THEIR PURCHASE OF NON-US
AIRCRAFT. MINDEF SMILED AND REPLIED HE NEVERTHELESS CONVINCED
IN LONG RUN KUWAIT WOULD NEVER REGRET OBTAINING TRAINING IN
US WHICH CLEARLY BEST IN WORLD. MOREOVER, GOK INTENDED TO
REQUEST USG TO SELL F-14 TO KUWAIT.

5. COMMENT: IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT, AS LONG AS WE ARE OFFERING
ONLY F-5 AND A-7, KUWAITIS ARE DEFINITELY GOING TO BUY FRENCH
AND BRITISH -- AND VERY SHORTLY -- ALTHOUGH DELIVERIES OF THESE
AIRCRAFT WILL NOT RPT NOT TAKE PLACE FOR TWO TO THREE YEARS.
KUWAITIS HAVE SENT THEIR TRAINEES TO US AND I AM ABSOLUTELY
CONVINCED THAT THEY WILL BUY AMERICAN SOONER OR LATER -- WHY
NOT SOONER? FOR EXAMPLE, COULD WE OFFER F-4 NOW, FOLLOWED
BY F-14? ALTHOUGH WE HAVE ALWAYS MAINTAINED F-4 TOO COMPLEX,
THIS ARGUMENT HAS NOT RPT NOT BEEN ACCEPTED HERE. WE MUST KEEP
UP WITH THE COMPETITION AND WE HAVE A SUPERIOR PRODUCT. IF WE
COULD SELL F-14, THIS WOULD OF COURSE LOWER UNIT COST OF
THIS AIRCRAFT TO ALL PURCHASERS.

6. ADDITIONALLY, RE AVIATION ORDNANCE, DO WE HAVE AN AIR-TO-
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 KUWAIT 00879 070908Z

AIR MIDDLE WITH PERFORMANCE (DOGFIGHT) SUPERIOR TO MATRA
R-530? FRENCH HAVE HIGHLIGHTED F-1 COMPATIBLE MATRA AS PROVIDING
LATEST AIR-TO-AIR CAPABILITY. OUR OFFER OF AIM-9G (SIDEWINDER)
HAS NOT IMPRESSED KUWAITIS.

7. WOULD APPRECIATE REPLY SOONEST.
STOLTZFUS

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NNN

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